

# UNITEHERE!

## Local 26

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One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108-1518

Dear Madam Attorney General:

We offer this letter in opposition to the Amended Final Judgment by Consent. The amendments jointly submitted by your office and Partners Healthcare do not address our concerns with the original Final Judgment by Consent.

As we stated in our previous letter, we made a difficult decision to limit the network of providers that our Health Fund covers. The biggest change was to eliminate Partners Healthcare from the network. By reviewing reports from your office we learned about disparities in healthcare pricing and quality scores in Massachusetts. We have come to understand that because of inflated pricing, Partners was taking an ever increasing percentage of our wages without providing better quality care. We had a choice between putting more money into a broken health care system to maintain our ability to go to Partners facilities, or to get pay raises. We chose to limit the network and get raises.

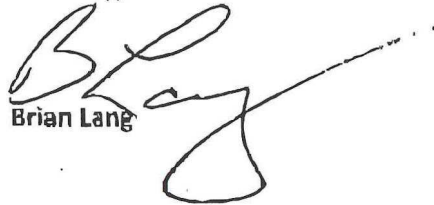
Since eliminating Partners from our network, our Health Fund has saved 18% from what we spent during the same period the previous year. As a result of these changes, we have access to good quality health care and receive substantial pay increases. If we did not make this change all economic increases that we negotiate with employers would go into paying for healthcare. Our members can ill afford to sacrifice wages or shoulder increased cost sharing. As policymakers grapple with growing income inequality, we cannot allow runaway health care profits to undermine the standard of living for working class families.

The Amended Final Judgment by Consent poses a serious threat to the progress that we have made in preserving our Health Fund and comprehensive coverage for workers who would not otherwise be able to afford it. Expanding Partners market power will

continue to inflate the price of healthcare in the most expensive healthcare market in the world. As we attempt to cope with this sad reality, it will further limit the choice of quality healthcare providers for our members and all others who try to contain costs by using more affordable doctors and hospitals. This is already the case on the North Shore. The Amended Final Judgment by Consent will expand the problem there and continue the pattern to the South Shore.

Partners has become the dominant health care giant in Massachusetts. Their increased market power has led to consumers losing the opportunity to choose affordably priced, high-quality healthcare. The Amended Final Judgment by Consent should not be approved.

Sincerely,

  
Brian Lang